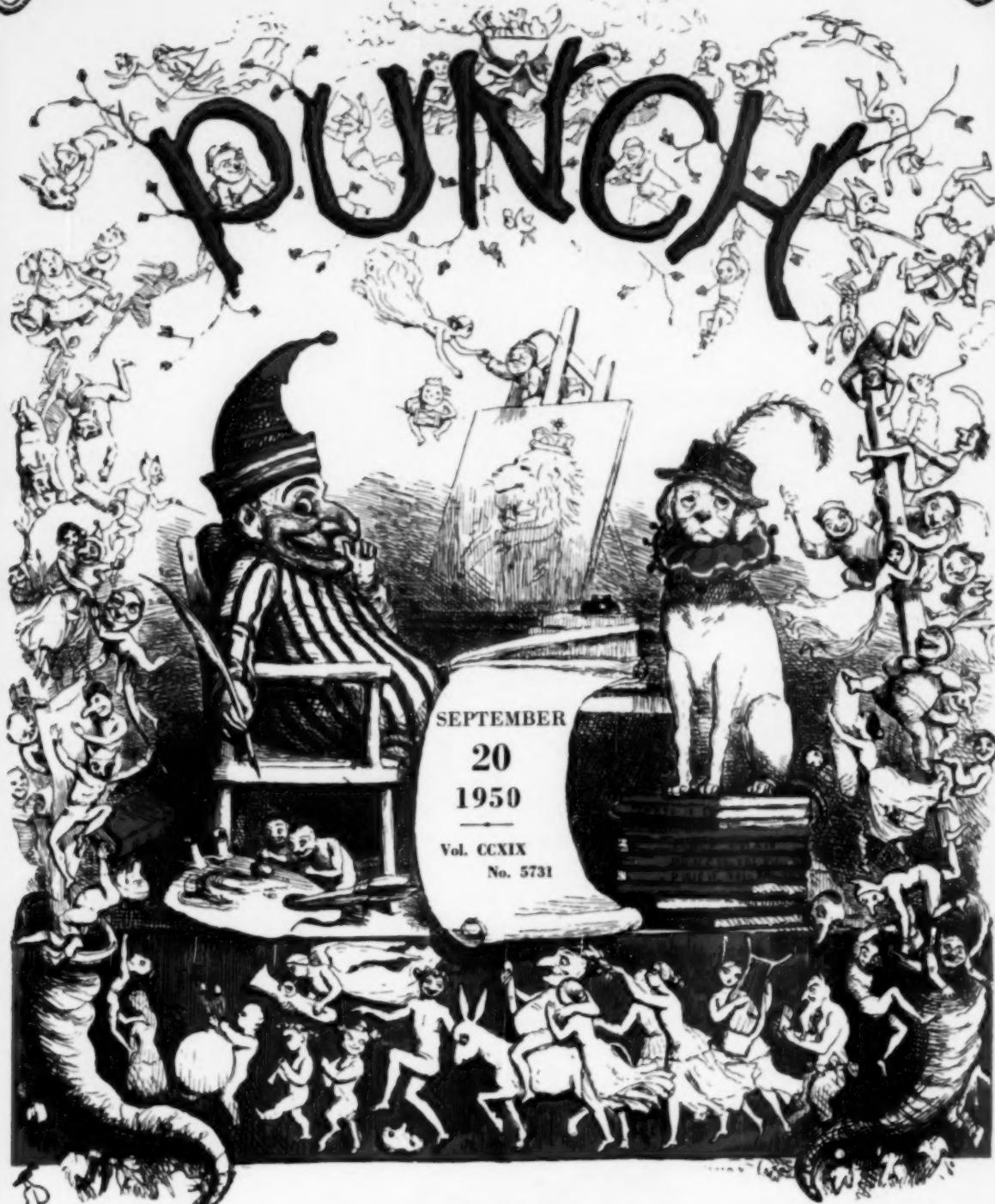


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PUNCH



SEPTEMBER

20

1950

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Vol. CCXIX

No. 5731

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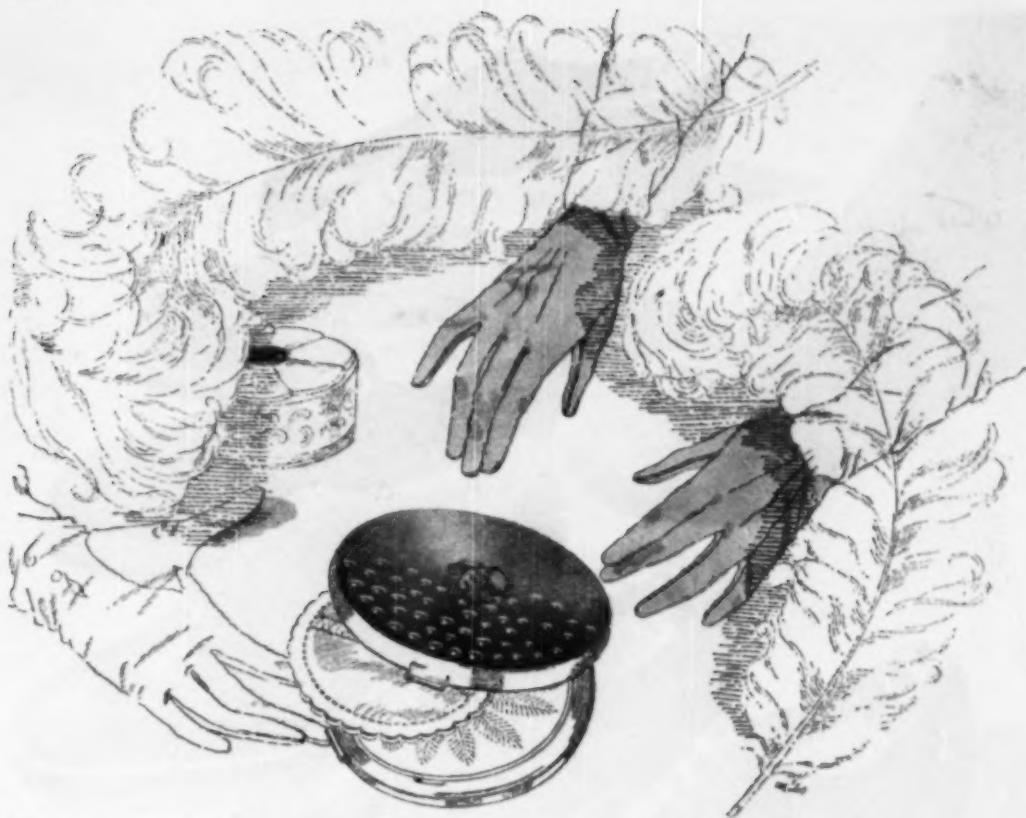
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(4)

This England . . .



Near Redmarley — Gloucestershire

LET US be thankful for clouds. Let us remember that the blue we crave can, at a month's end, prove more pitiless, more deadening than the downpours of our "February fill-dyke." The great cloud galleons enhance the blue—and give us the green; add gaiety to a March morning and purple majesty to the close of day. And when they decant "upon the place beneath," that you are there is an accident; that the flowers and grass, the barley and the hops are there, is of design. For your enrichment, for your comfort, the rain falls—to give you fine cattle, good crops . . . and beer called Bass or Worthington. Yes, let there be clouds.



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little...



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FEW THINGS
DRIER TO
DRINK
THAN
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to-day

The modern preference for the double-breasted style in dinner jacket suits marks a welcome change from the starched-front tradition. This model, impeccably tailored in black all-wool barathea, will be warmly appreciated by the man who likes to enjoy complete comfort. The facings are of corded silk and the suit is available in a wide range of fittings. Chest sizes 36 to 44.

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CHARIVARIA

BECAUSE Stockport parents insist on helping their children with arithmetic, though their knowledge is out of date, the local Schools Committee has begun a mathematics class for fathers. Additional classes will presumably be arranged if the grandfathers insist on helping the fathers with *their* homework.



This Impenetrable Curtain

"Cricket—An English ball game, in which the players, divided into two teams, try with a stick to drive the ball through the goal of their opponent."—*Translation of entry in Russian dictionary*.

Now that British Railways are putting on faster trains the habitual late traveller will have to speed up his dash from booking-office to platform, if he is to see the guard's van just disappearing round the bend.

N

"In many other towns the trolley buses are virtually silent. Surely it is not beyond the ingenuity and industry of Birmingham to stop the awful screech ours make, as the conductor runs along the overhead wire."

Letter in "Birmingham Mail"
Try a catapult.

It is announced that next year Edenbridge, Kent, will switch over from gas street-lighting to electricity to mark the Festival of Britain. There is an obstinate local belief that the Festival of Britain is being arranged to mark next year's switch-over in Edenbridge from gas street-lighting to electricity.



The Cynic

"Once peace is restored in Korea it will be more important than ever that a new attempt be made to resume the processes of negotiation, mediation, and conciliation which divide the world and threaten to condemn us all to a third world war."

Mr. Trygve Lie, quoted in "The Times"

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A Swedish scientist states that death is theoretically not inevitable. This ranks in importance with that other great truth that the pedestrian has the right of way.

"If all goes well with Johnson in the next crucial years there is no telling how far he may go in the 440 yards or the 880 yards."

"Manchester Guardian"

We advise him not to exceed a quarter-mile and a half-mile, respectively.

Marshal Tito now says that if trouble should break out he may appeal to Mr. Truman. After all he isn't likely to appeal much to Mr. Stalin.

Dr. W. V. Bradshaw has been engaged to examine the feet of three hundred and forty-three Fort Worth (Texas) policemen. We presume this is what is known as having due regards for the ends of justice.



D. S. & D.

TIGERS OVER KOREA

YOU know the way Koreans have, Cartwright said (hearing the word Korea in someone else's conversation), of waving their right arms gracefully over their heads towards the azimuth whenever they say anything to you. (He demonstrated, and very graceful it was.)

What you were saying, he went on, reminds me of the time when I was in Korea just before the war. You know what the country's like of course with the hills *here*, and the flat country down *here*, and the mountains over *here*, and dominating everything, like a great Hadrian's

Wall, the magnificent sweep of the thirty-eighth parallel cutting across it from east to west. Well, in this part, up *here*, you get tiger-shooting. We went there in the first place to prospect for sodium, but you know what I am when there's a chance of a bit of tiger-shootin'.

We'd been told that the best place to go was a village called Yungdong, but we were a bit taken aback when we got there to see these enormous flocks of goats on the hills. Obviously with all those little beggars lying about loose that was no tiger

6 6

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON, FILLS IN HIS FOOTBALL COUPONS

Paving-stone neurosis and the mathematics of football pools were discussed by the British Association.

XXVIII

NO more; the gods of Science range
The kingdoms of the world of men,
And question how, and why, and when,
And plumb the depths of Time and Change.

Of this our dust and things that are,
"This was," they say, "and this shall be";
To this and that they hold the key,
An atom here, and there a star.

With grave and patient skill they probe
The secret of the powers that run
From swaying tide and glowing sun
To waste upon the spinning globe;

Or search that dim and strange unknown
Of his unquiet mind who tries
To tread each several gap that lies
'Twixt paving-stone and paving-stone.

But pausing in my equal choice,
I question which, and why, and when;
With doubtful and uplifted pen
I pause—and then another voice

Unfolds that stern and awful law
Which rules the Fate of them who choose
The twilight way 'twixt win and lose,
Or, otherwise, predict a draw.

I write; the warning accents fall
Unheeded, tho' I know the cost.
'Tis better to have pooled and lost
Than never to have pooled at all.

G. H. VALLINS

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country, so we made a few more inquiries.

Well, they told us—you know the way they wave their arms over their heads—they said they had no tigers there, but over *there* there was a village where a man had seen a tiger. So we trekked off to this other village, Foo-ning it was called, something like that, and asked for this man who'd seen a tiger. They all knew about it, though they couldn't find the man at first. Anyway, to cut a long story short, my bearer came in to me the next morning in a stew of excitement, and said "Here is the man that saw the tiger."

I told him to send the man in, and in he came—you know how they dress, all white clothes and those funny little hats, I'm sure you've all seen them. We said good morning to one another and I said to him "I hear you've seen a tiger."

Yes, he said, waving his arm gracefully, like this, yes, he'd seen a tiger.

"Was it far from here?" I asked him, and he said no, it was about an hour's journey on foot. So we all set off, very excited, with this old chap leading us, and finally we came to a place and the man said this was where it was. There was quite a bit of a thicket there, almost a jungle, and it was over *there*, the old man said. There were some goats grazing there, he said, and the tiger came out from the trees over *there*, and before anyone could do anything it had got one of the goats and gone off back into the trees.

"Did anyone go after it?" I asked.

He said no, he thought not.

Well, we went along to where this tiger was supposed to have taken this goat, and I looked around for some tracks, but couldn't see any. So I whistled up this old chap, and I said "How long is it now since you saw this tiger?"

"Oh," he said, waving his arm over his head in the way they have, "it was about forty years ago, when I was going to school."

We never found any sodium either.

B. A. YOUNG



JAN SMUTS, PIONEER



ICED WATER AND BARBECUES

1163½ SYRACUSE AVENUE
HYATTA, GA.
U.S.A.

31st August, 1950

To the Association of British Hoteliers
GENTLEMEN.—No citizen of the United States of America has a greater feeling of goodwill towards Britain and its people than the writer of these lines, and I yield to no man in the strength of my conviction that the destinies of our two countries are indissolubly linked together. These sentiments are the credentials which I hope justify me in offering you some advice.

I have just returned from a vacation in your country. You were expecting me, I knew. For months your newspapers (which I study unremittingly) have carried such head-

lines as "Preparing for the American Invasion," "Iced Water and Coffee" and the like. Any movement towards understanding between nations enjoys my support; besides, that is good business. But, gentlemen, there is such a thing as over-enthusiasm; and when this is allied to misunderstanding, the results are calculated to be startling. But startling.

This matter of "Iced Water and Coffee." If I drink water, sure, I like it cold and with ice. Equally I like coffee. I suppose I drink nearly as much coffee per day as an Englishman drinks tea. But these are not my staple items of diet. I do not care for iced water on first wakening, nor do I regard iced water with coffee on the side as an adequate breakfast. Nor, I will add for

the benefit of a certain waiter, do I go much for iced coffee and hot water.

This is not all. Their well-meant efforts to make me feel at home led some of your fraternity to strange gestures, based, I surmise, upon the distorted picture of our way of life presented by the cinema. At one establishment I was invited to barbecue my own lunch. Armed with a spit I was led to a specially-dug hole in the lawn, full of hot ashes. The proprietor was obviously under the impression that he was making me feel, as indeed he put it himself, "real folks." We do have barbecues at home, but we rarely go to so much trouble for a single pork chop. It was here, by the way, that I was slapped on the back and called "Neighbour" a good deal. This may be very well for visitors from Maine or Vermont, but, gentlemen, I am from Georgia. And let me say, here and now, for the guidance of your hotel orchestras, that they will not get to first base with citizens of my state by playing "Marching Thru Georgia." I know it is meant kindly, but don't do it.

Gentlemen, we must clarify the fork situation. We put more emphasis on the use of this article than you do, but the knife, too, has its place in our scheme of things. We do not employ it in your fashion, as a kind of badly designed trowel, but we like to have it around to cut things with. Too often my appearance at a restaurant table was the signal for the removal of all edged tools to a place of safety. Maybe they expected me to whip out a Bowie.

We Americans are a gregarious people. We like to talk to strangers and to broaden our views; but we like such talk to be natural. Your propaganda has succeeded in convincing a large number of your countrymen that to engage American visitors in conversation is a national obligation on a par with buying Savings Bonds or not shooting the fox. Thus, my peace of mind has frequently been disturbed by my perceiving on the face of a neighbour at table that rigid stare, that flushing of the features, that air of partial strangulation, which an-

nounce an Englishman's determination to address a friendly word to an unknown alien. Before they pass his lips I hear the words: "I say—you're an American, aren't you?" This is a challenge I gladly answer; but I could do without the close scrutiny of my shoes and neckwear which preceded its delivery. Our neckties are bright. They are part of our pursuit of happiness.

Once launched, conversation follows familiar channels, and at the risk of bringing Anglo-American social traffic to a grinding halt let me go on record with a few answers to the questions we are usually asked.

(i) I do not know if the film *The Snake Pit* is a true presentation of life in an American mental hospital. I have never been inside one; nor have any of my family or friends. My sole contact with insanity was in my great-aunt Indiana who, of her own free will, left Georgia to live in some place north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Through some looseness in the drafting of our statutes this in itself was not held to be conclusive evidence of mental instability.

(ii) I am no deeper in the counsels of Mr. Truman than the average Englishman is in those of Mr. Attlee.

(iii) The difference between the Democrats and the Republicans is a subject so obscure and diffuse that I explain it only to those Englishmen who can give me a concise statement of the aims of their own political favourites. I am not much troubled under this head.

(iv) I am aware that in Britain baseball is called rounders, and as the two games bear little resemblance, one to the other, I do not find this remarkable.

(v) I know you stood alone. You may safely leave your record to the history books.

(vi) I have never been to Hollywood. My dear old bean, have you ever been to New York? Don't look surprised—the journeys involved are roughly the same length.

Finally, gentlemen, let me indicate a simple fact which seems to have escaped your notice. We do not come to Britain for hot-dogs and iced water. We come for fog, ruins, pageantry and warm ale. We come for a change. If we do not get it we

are disappointed in the main object of our visit. Myself, how I would have loved a dish of Brussels sprouts, swimming in tepid water, such as I have heard tell of. But no one gave me any.

Yours, etc.,
LAFAYETTE P. JEFFERSON

FANTASY UNDER THE TREES

(NOW WE ARE FIFTY)

HEMINGWAY has
Great Big
Combat
Boots on;
Hemingway has a
Great Big
Combat
Hat
And the Purple Heart
And a High-class
Girl Friend—
And that
(says Hemingway)
Is
That!



FIRST GOLD TO WORST WHITE

THE ANCIENT SCORTON SILVER
ARROW

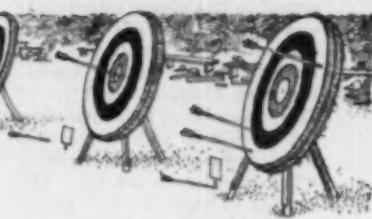
THE annual competition for the Scorton Silver Arrow hangs, like many of our traditions, by a slender thread, which might by laziness, carelessness or indifference be snapped so easily, and its burden lost in the busy whirlpool of modern times. Its only fixed quantities are the Arrow itself and the Captain of the Arrow who assumes office upon scoring the first gold of the meeting, and is thereby charged with the custody of the Arrow and its time-hallowed archives, and with the formidable duty of choosing the place for next year's meeting (it must be in Yorkshire), organizing it, advertising it, presiding at the luncheon and providing the wine. He, like all the other competitors, may come from any corner of England, and once the competition is over and the bowmen return home the new Captain is the tradition's lonely guardian. There is no committee, no administrative body, nothing; yet annually, since 1673 (with rare gaps), the trophy has been won.

To-day's contest is the two hundred and forty-second, and the prize fell early; soon after eleven o'clock this morning, in the green saucer of Ben Rhydding sports ground, Ilkley, at the gateway to the Dalea, a Bowman of Overdale sent his arrow whispering into the gold, and was duly "esteemed and adjudged" the Captain of the Arrow for the year ahead. But this by no means ends the meeting, which is,



in fact, hardly begun: now all the other prizes must be "gotten or shot down," and there is a sweep-stake for the "best gold," and a horn spoon and a kitty to be won by the "worst white"—paradoxically enough; but then the Scorton Arrow prides itself on a determined topsy-turvydom; a broad element of luck enters even into the winning of the Arrow itself, for an archer may score ten golds in the course of the day while the man who scored the first never gets another. It is further laid down in those old rules of 1673 that the contestants, each of whom must make a small deposit to begin with, shall receive sixpence for each hit in the red, blue and black, and a shilling for the gold; for hits in the white (the outermost ring) they must pay sixpence into the kitty, although—another bit of contrariness—complete misses go unpenalized.

Thus, for the mere drawing of his 50 lb. bow some hundred and fifty times during the day, and the concomitant expenditure of enough energy to lift several tons dead-weight, the skilled Bowman may find himself richer by as much as his whole taxi-fare to the station—provided his self-control is equal to his skill: if it is not he may find himself in trouble under Rule Seven: "If any of them shall that Day curse or swear in the hearing of that Company, and the same proved



before the Captain and the Lieutenant, he shall forthwith pay downe One Shilling, and so proportionably for every oath, to be distributed by the Captain to the use of the Poore of that Place . . ." And since the exercise of archery, though (to quote the same Rule) "lawful, laudable, healthful and innocent," can have its irritating moments the Vicar of Ben Rhydding is assured of something in his poor-box this day, and will no doubt recall that the Old Testament speaks more than once of "the deceitful bow." The wielding of that warlike instrument is no simple matter. In the cool of the evening Mr. Punch's Archery Correspondent did manage to draw a bowstring back as far as his nose, but the rebellious spasms of his muscles and the panic flight of a few observant spectators in the target area caused him to pass the weapon, undischarged, to Mr. Punch's Artist, who, after a professional show of sighting, dropped the arrow on his boots.

No, you have to be brought up to it, like twinkling, brown-faced Ben Hird, who won the Arrow in 1900 and is re-entering the lists to-day with arm and eye as steady



as ever—or Tom Kelly (Captain, 1929), erect and confident in stand-up collar, spats, black Homburg hat and cardigan of Lincoln green.

There seems no costume laid down for archery, but from to-day's field it is plain that a splash of green somewhere on the person is favoured—sometimes the shirt, sometimes the

Mr. P.'s A.C. has to report a slight unrest in that "union"; a discussion after the Arrow luncheon is as traditional as the Arrow itself. Today, in the Ben Rhydding cricket pavilion, among the wine-glasses and cold apple-pie crumbs, the controversy which may be summarized as steel bows v. wooden, and which

up-to-date; and if arrows, why not bows? Six more bowmen spring up. They observe, variously and emphatically, that the Rule refers only to weight and length; that arrows aren't bows; that the gentlemen of 1673 would have rejected no improving aid proffered by contemporary science, otherwise they would never have progressed beyond javelins; that a steel bow, with its cold disregard for variations in the barometric pressure, takes half the art out of archery . . . But now there are cries of "Chair! Chair!" The Captain wishes to announce that the afternoon's shooting is due to begin in two minutes. . . .

It is enough. The rules clearly specify two hours' shooting before the luncheon and two hours' after. Order is restored, votes of thanks passed, glasses emptied, belts re-buckled, and the bowmen stream out once more on to the field, where the twenty coloured targets, ranged in two tens, a hundred yards apart, wink at each other in the sun. Nothing has been settled, as usual.

And so the last two hours pass until all the prizes have been "gotten or shot down." The new Captain, bearing off the Arrow in its plush-lined box and the treasured records in their green baize bag, looks heavy with responsibility. But perhaps he is not thinking so much of his lonely guardianship, or of next year's meeting, or even of the provision of wine for fifty; perhaps that after-luncheon debate is on his mind—particularly as he has to-day won the Aunciente Silver Arrow with a new steel bow.

J. B. BOOTHROYD

jerkin or jacket, or the huge woollen tassel which bobs at every waist (to clean those arrows that perversely enter the ground); often the cap is green—and stoutly padded above the peak, since bows are sometimes deceitful enough to break. Mr. A. G. Banks, staunch traditionalist, wears what can only be an archery jacket, rough and green, and with a multitude of pockets; his felt hat has been moulded through the years into a twirly-brimmed Robin Hoodishness; and when the first gold was scored he gave nine husky toots on the horn hanging by his side.

The motto of archery (away with "Toxophily" and its pretentious hint of poisoned arrows; archery is a fine, muscular word) is said to be

Stout arm, strong bow and steady eye, Union, true heart, and courtesy,
and it is therefore with regret that

bubbles throughout British archery at this time, rages with special point: is the new steel bow to be debarred from competing for the Aunciente Scorton Silver Arrow?

Last year's Captain, still in control of affairs until the end of the day, is young and progressive and is all for the steel. Mr. A. G. Banks, hunting horn awning, is all for the yew wood, the true wood—or Osage orange at the very least; it is deplorable, he declares, to prize of adherence to tradition, and yet admit a weapon which those gentlemen of 1673 had never dreamed of. "Ah," says the Captain—"but had they?" And he loudly declaims the Rule under which contestants may shoot "with what manner of shaft every one pleaseth"; this, he maintains, is a sign that the founders foresaw the replacement of red deal arrows by something more



AT THE PICTURES

Senza Pietà—Mister 880

IF one confesses to a small measure of disappointment in *Senza Pietà* (Director: ALBERTO LATUADA) it is only because the Italian cinema has earned since the war the right to be judged by standards higher than one applies elsewhere. *Senza Pietà* does not lack the strong, sincere story characteristic of the contemporary Italian film, nor the expressive yet never exaggerated acting, the imaginative and sympathetic direction, the lucid photography; but its determined obsession with vice and violence, its conviction that true hearts are to be found only in the breasts of fallen women and coloured G.I.s bring it sometimes within a perilously short distance of self-parody. From the very first shot of Angelo (CARLA DEL POGGIO) cowering in the cattle-truck you find yourself thinking not how lifelike the characters are but how much they look and act like characters in an Italian film.

But there, you cannot expect a *Vivere in Pace* every time, and perhaps if one had enjoyed fewer Italian pictures since the war the fault would not appear at all.

The story is tragic without being morbid. Angela, on her way to Leghorn to find her brother, falls in with an American Negro soldier, Jerry. Unable to find her brother, she sinks into a life of easy virtue, from which Jerry is able to save her only by forsaking his scruples and selling Army property to a gang of dock-thieves, a course of conduct which leads swiftly down the *facilis descensus Averno* to homicide and armed robbery, and eventually to death for the two of them. It is simply and effectively told, and greatly helped by the acting of CARLA DEL POGGIO as the girl, JOHN KITEMILLER as Jerry, and PIERRE CLAUDE as Pier Luigi, the gangsters' leader. I could not decry a moral in it anywhere, I am bound to admit; but there must be room in any art for an occasional story whose object is simply to



Nothing but the Truth

Steve Buchan—BURT LANCASTER; Mac—MILLARD MITCHELL; Skipper Miller—EDMUND GWENN; Ann Winslow—DOROTHY McGuIRE

exercise the emotions without necessarily edifying the mind; and this one exercises them most satisfactorily—until you recollect that after all it is only an Italian film.

How different is the American attitude to life is strikingly shown in *Mister 880* (Director: EDMUND GOULDING), which has been made out of a *New Yorker* story. The *New Yorker* almost always invests aged Central Europeans with an aura of treacly romance, so it is hardly surprising that this tale of a quaint, lovable old man of German birth who prints his own dollar-bills and distributes them with such address that he keeps the U.S. Secret Service guessing for ten years should be dripping with sentimentality in every inch. It is a rather nice kind of sentimentality, though, and the fact that it centres in such a dear old treacle-well as EDMUND GWENN's Skipper Miller does much to keep nausea well over the horizon. As a tale of investigation it rates fairly low: BURT LANCASTER's final solution of the problem owes more to a series of

happy coincidences than to any vast display of acumen. Still, who would want to see a lot of ugly policemen third-degreeing Mr. GWENN, whose charm is such that at his eventual trial even the prosecution plead for him?

The direction has many witty touches—for instance, the scene witnessed through the window of the bookatore—and DOROTHY McGuIRE extracts all there is to be got from a rather perfunctory feminine interest. An unpretentious but delightful film, and a most soothing balm after an evening with the Italians.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Outstanding among this week's releases is *The Inspector General* (19/4/50), a remarkable combination of Gogol and Danny Kaye which should come as near as is humanly possible to pleasing everyone. Also released is *The Gunfighter* (23/8/50), a well-devised character-study in a Western setting; GREGORY PECK stars.

B. A. YOUNG

THE BATH

WE had been trying for a long time to get a new bath at Uluska. It wasn't for my house of course; Number Two in the station isn't expected to be fussy. But my District Commissioner had taken a strong dislike to his bath and one couldn't blame him. The government issue in his quarters was a battered grey tin tub shaped like a coffin. It badly wanted a nice, cheerful coat of paint and it clanged alarmingly when anyone sat down in it. Moreover, its emptying was a major operation by the entire household staff until the D.C. cut a hole in the bottom. The water left the bath all right but was rather apt to form mosquito breeding swamps in the less level parts of the bathroom floor.

Indent for a bath, white, porcelain, with plug attached, flowed out of the office at frequent intervals and letters went to and fro, but headquarters seemed to have the idea that up-country officers did not need baths. We had just begun to give up hope when we got news that we might expect a new bath in the near future.

We called in our invaluable Juma bin Ali and told him that at last he would get his chance to do a bit of plumbing. The result was impressive. In no time at all he had pushed two pipes through the D.C.'s bathroom wall without major disaster.

After that, all we wanted was a couple of old cement barrels, the co-operation of our prison staff to keep them filled with water, and a little fire in the right place, and there was our h. and c. laid on. Juma even found a tap marked "COLD" in large letters which he fixed on to the hot water pipe. After experimenting with a cork in the other one we decided it was more comfortable not to interfere with this arrangement.

Altogether it was a fine, modern piece of work and didn't really cost a penny, thanks to a useful little balance in our Destruction of Vermin vote.

We thought a lot about the new bath as we sat back waiting for it to arrive. "Just picture it," said

the D.C., "all white and smooth, with a nice shiny chain and a plug on the end. No more blocking the hole with an old mealie cob. I shan't know myself. You must come in and try it, old boy."

At last a lorry arrived with a big bundle on it. We impatiently ripped off the sacking with the head messenger's spear and there was our bath.

It was a bad moment. The people at headquarters had sent us another grey tin coffin identical with our present one except that no one had had the sense to knock a hole in the bottom.

After that the coffin travelled quite a lot between Uluska and headquarters. The Furniture Officer said that it was off his charge and that there was no known procedure for taking a bath back into store once it had got out. We replied that he hadn't sent us a bath, anyway.

and that we already had one coffin on the station.

Then the long rains broke while the coffin was still on our side of the river. We decided against trying to float it across and faced up to the fact that we were landed with the thing for good.

But we were wrong. One mail day, several weeks later, the D.C. called me in and waved a letter at me. "We win," he said, "they'll exchange the coffin for a proper bath. Get it packed up and sent off as soon as you can."

The road is nearly passable for lorries now and I can't put things off much longer. But I shall be quite sorry to lose the coffin. After my own undersized safari tub I became quite attached to it. I only hope that the Furniture Officer will think it has been improved by having a hole knocked in its bottom to let the water out.



I PASSED BY YOUR WINDOW

I THINK we were all relieved when they took the stuffed things away. Throughout the last years of the war we had been obliged to look at the slowly crumbling windowful.

Not only were there parties of progressively moth-eaten birds sitting under dim domes and clutching phoney scenery; there was a spiked fish like a haggis stuck full of needles; an appalling pair of boxing squirrels wearing little red shorts; and a nerve-racking wildcat with bright pink gums. Serving as a backdrop to all this ownerless splendour was an extensive raccoon-skin rug, sporting about five unnecessary but ornamental tails, the last of which fell off the day before they cleaned the place up.

As though the shop could not at first shake off its furry spirit its next occupant was a melancholy alien who exhibited coats, capes and neckpieces of dubious and anonymous skins.

"In a big shop," one of his hand-written showcards boasted, "you would pay £30 for a such

coat. Here you pay only £29." He was with us six months.

Then it became obvious that something quite new was happening. The place turned green and many small tables and chairs arrived. They called it "The Kitchen Shelf," and food, not fur, was the order of the day. Tables, waitresses and managers were covered in gingham, and there was some jollity in the form of comic felt dolls sprawling in the window. This was appropriate, because they gave you the dearest little doll-size helpings of lunch.

After that, without pausing to consider that the shop stood on a bleak and perpetually windy corner, the entirely new management brought a carefree Continental atmosphere to the neighbourhood. One or two embarrassed-looking business men, obviously wishing that they hadn't done it, would sit outside under the awning manipulating wind-flapped newspaper and unwilling salad while the corners of the bright table-cloths whipped merrily into the mayonnaise.

The next proprietor could not decide what era he belonged to: he had fluorescent lighting on the ceiling and smoky oil lamps on the tables. He introduced a short-lived, three-piece ladies' orchestra, with plenty of room for improvement but none for their elbows. His successor saw fit to name his restaurant The Gipsy's Caravan, for no reason that I could ever make out, except that it was here to-day, gone to-morrow and regarded with some suspicion by the natives.

This finished the food cycle, unless you count the brief sojourn of the tropical fish shop, whose green gloom and pouting population attracted more snub-nosed youth than serious trade.

Madame Tarantula came then, and hung one frock, six mirrors and three chandeliers around the place. Privately I thought that her couture wasn't so haute, whatever she claimed; I could have done better myself, particularly the buttonholes.

Then there was a grey vacuum, and the corner shop began forlornly to gather dust. Day after day there was nothing to look at at all. This went on for about seven weeks, until one morning my attention was caught by a large notice in the window which said "Coming Soon. Watch For It!" Eagerly I watched for it, and in a week the notice was replaced by another which asked "Is Your Curiosity Aroused?" I had to admit that it was.

Presently a sign-painter climbed up the shop-front on a ladder, and got to work with quaint paint. When I left to go shopping he had achieved "Coo—" in three different colours. On my way back I saw that it had developed into "Cooper's Cu—" and by tea-time it was "Cooper's Curiosity Shop."

Next day a van drew up, and an energetic person unfastened the back of it and dived inside. I hung about inquisitively to see what he was going to bring out.

It was with a feeling of despondency that I noted his first burden: a glass case of stuffed squirrels. They were playing tennis.



"Something funny, dear?"





"What's it like in?"

SHOW AND GYMKHANA

THE first in the Collecting Ring is always a small boy in shorts, toughly astride a chestnut cob, and the next a long-backed girl with interminable legs riding a neat out-grown black pony that pokes its head. But the first in the Ring itself is always Patsy Threadneedle.

We are nearly through with the showing classes now. Only one of the *rillers* in the Ponies Not Exceeding Twelve Two has fallen off. Patsy Threadneedle has won the Thirteen Twos. Both judges are now spending what seems like twenty-five minutes scrutinizing the rear elevation of a flashy looking grey in the Fourteen Twos.

Show and gymkhana judges need not necessarily be aged, and can be of any shape or height. There is one inflexible rule. One must wear a bowler hat a size too large, and one must wear a bowler hat a size too small.

Away beyond the Secretary's Tent the Pens of Two Ram Lambs are being judged in a religious silence. Men are circumscribing them with yard measures and gazing deep, deep into their peerless eyes. In a black and white circle, majestic, mystical, the Friesian Heifers With Not More than Four Permanent Incisors swing slowly round their judges.

Attention, please! Will the finder of a tie-pin with a fox's head on it please bring it to the Secretary's Tent?

Ah—the Parade of Prize-winning Beasts. A lady in a dust-coat leading a Bona-fide Agricultural Foal has been swung off her feet. Slowly, with the gait and dignity of trolley-buses, the prize-winning bulls roll on. Here is one with a curly forelock and the cubic volume of a council cottage. Lady Fête-and-Gala has presented him with a silver cup, which he receives with a look of deep reproach.

Now being judged, Event Number Eleven, the Best Child Rider Twelve Years and Under. A contest causing more strife and envy in the human breast than any other country event in the year except perhaps the inter-parochial music festival. April Snooks has got the best-cut jodhpurs, but Irene Hotchkiss is flapping her outside leg. Luckily it's the one the judges can't see. Keep your hands down, Cyril! Patsy Threadneedle has been called in first. The people in the shooting brake are sucking their teeth. The people in the big saloon are muttering "*That* child will never see twelve again." Both delightful couples, normally, but there is something about the Best Child Rider Event that demoralizes the most balanced parents. Patsy

Threadneedle is riding round the Ring with a blue rosette in her teeth. We in the West have blue for first, and red for second, whatever they may do in the godless shires.

Here come the Heavy Trade Turn-outs, brightly painted wagons and carts pulled by very over-dressed cart-horses all in the pink of condition. This event alone is worth the car-park money. Spangled o'er with innumerable glittering brass ornaments, hung with great bunches of baste, their manes and tails tightly plaited in bright ribbons, the horses rise above these hula-hula trappings and press on exceedingly briskly. They trundle round the Ring with a merry noise of brass bells. There are four of them, and the judges know what's what and award two firsts and two seconds. Prolonged applause.

Away round the Ring go entries for the Walk, Trot and Gallop, and now the posts are going up for the Open Polo Bending. A young farmer wins the first heat, and Sally who teaches music at St. Botolph's has won the second. The long-legged girl has knocked over a post, and the third heat is won by a boy called Paul on a young bay mare that he's got properly hotted up and that takes him clean out of the Ring and very likely straight on till Christmas.

Patsy Threadneedle has won the Under Fourteen Water-carrying . . . Any more entries for the Open Egg and Spoon?

The Ewe Hoggets are all safely penned up now and their owners have gone to the tent for a glass of beer. Will anyone take a raffle ticket for a goose?

The V.C. race has very suitably been won by a corporal from the training depot.

Patsy Threadneedle is human after all. She has gone away to have an ice cream, and Nicholas Toop has won the Potato Race Under Fourteen.

The sun has gone right round and is now shining full upon us up the valley. Far away up the hill the combine has ceased combining. It is after six, and the jumping hasn't started yet.

Attention, please! Will the parents of Michael Henry Hatch kindly come to the Secretary's Tent and collect him?

Number Thirty-three has refused at the Brush Fence. Leg into him, Samhy! Number Thirty-three has been eliminated. Number Ninety-seven has knocked down the post and rail, but there are far too many clear rounds. They are going to jump off, and we shall all be here till midnight. Number Forty-three has obligingly taken off too late at the triple and incurred four faults.

Patsy Threadneedle has won the Juvenile Jumping.

Three hundred children on ponies are coming into the Ring. Or very nearly as many. This event is the Musical Posts Under Sixteen. Here is Norma Sweeney on a little slug of a piebald called Panda. For three years Norma Sweeney has read nothing at all except books about small despised girls who buy a pony for thirty shillings and end by winning all the events at the local gymkhana. Someone should have told Norma Sweeney that literature is not like life.

In real life the gymkhana events are always won by Patsy Threadneedle.

The music has stopped. A boy on a dun with a hogged mane is out. It has stopped again. The Stacey twins are holding the same post. One must go, and this event will break the Stacey family clean up for several weeks. Who invented gymkhana, anyway? Some thoughtless Indians, probably—living near Jodhpur, and having no regard for Mrs. Stacey's nervous system.

The victorious Friesians, packed tightly into their cattle truck, are jolting off the field and away into the sunset. The draw for the goose is about to be held. Lady Fête-and-Gala is unfolding the winning ticket.

Norma Sweeney has now stayed in for six rounds and her parents are holding their breath. She was up at five cleaning Panda's tack, and ate very little breakfast and no lunch. The music stops again. The boy called Paul has come to gripes with his young bay mare and he whisks her into the centre and seizes the last empty post before Norma's outstretched hand can close upon it. The heartless music is starting again, but Panda lolllops out of the Ring. No sleep for Colonel and Mrs. Sweeney to-night, and Norma will probably have to go to a psychologist. They had much better have brought her up on *Ivanhoe* and the *Violet Fairy Book*.

The sun slants from the end of the valley on to an emptying field, bright with discarded raffle tickets and ice-cream cartons. Some parts they fuss about litter, but we in the West can swallow a little lot like this in a night's wind and not know we've had it.

The music stops for the last time.

Attention, please! Here is the result of the Under Sixteen Musical Posts. First, Patsy Threadneedle . . .



"Promise me you won't nibble at Lindwall's out-swinger."



HARD by the road the Roman made,
where once the clanking cohorts stepped
and the dark Norman drove his trade
while all his riding lances leaped,
fresh from the sated wars of faith
the Ironside in grey garrison
followed no more his captain Death
and set aside both sword and gun,

put to the plough his hand and built
his hamlet; won from willing earth
a harvest winnowed without guilt
from fruits that grew in gentle birth:
for time there is the sword to bear
against the regiments of ill,
and time the quiet sun to share:
so dwelt he on his lonely hill,

remembering how the Cavalier
on Dunkirk's burning outworks stood
beside his culverins to cheer
the iron brother of his blood:
remembering, when the faith had died
and sin again waxed bold and strong
and truth it seemed at last had lied,
the burden of his battle-song:

Don, don your morion,
your cuirass gird;
fill, fill your clarion
with the wonder of the Word.
Smite down the godless
Amalekite herd;
give rule to the rodless
for the glory of the Word.
Furbish clean your armour
that your faith may find reward:
let the Word be prophesied
in the singing
of the Sword!

Don, don your
your cuirass
fill, fill your c
with the wo
Saddle up you
buckle tight
the Lord is yo
and the we
Furbish clean
let there be
the Word tha
in the singi
of the Swe

AT
TLE
TLEMENT

White the plumes of horsemen, prancing,
danced the road beside his
grave;

leaped the light in gleaming glancing,
point to point and wave on
wave;

pikes, pikes in line of marching
jaunting to the fife in play,
pikes against the low sky lurching;
pikes that moved to Malplaquet.

Red the coats that went in order,
high the pope-hat's gleam of
gold,
gay the facings' braided border,
loud the drums that rapped and
rolled:

drums, drums of fusiliers,
drums, drums of marching men,
drums of gallant grenadiers;
drums that spoke at Dettingen.

Bright blades together ranking,
bayonets in file on file,
scabbards on the horse-flank clanking,
helmets glinting mile on mile:
bugles on the cold air blowing,
bugles on the bitter breeze
from Portugal to Provence going,
blowing through the Pyrenees.

Tramp of feet and grind of guns
sounding on the road again,
feet that marched the mire of
Mons
and strode the roads from Alamein.
Deep, deep, the Ironside lying
sees again the dawn of wrong,
knows once more the faith undying
waking in his battle-song:

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of the Word.
urer,
girth;
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of your worth.
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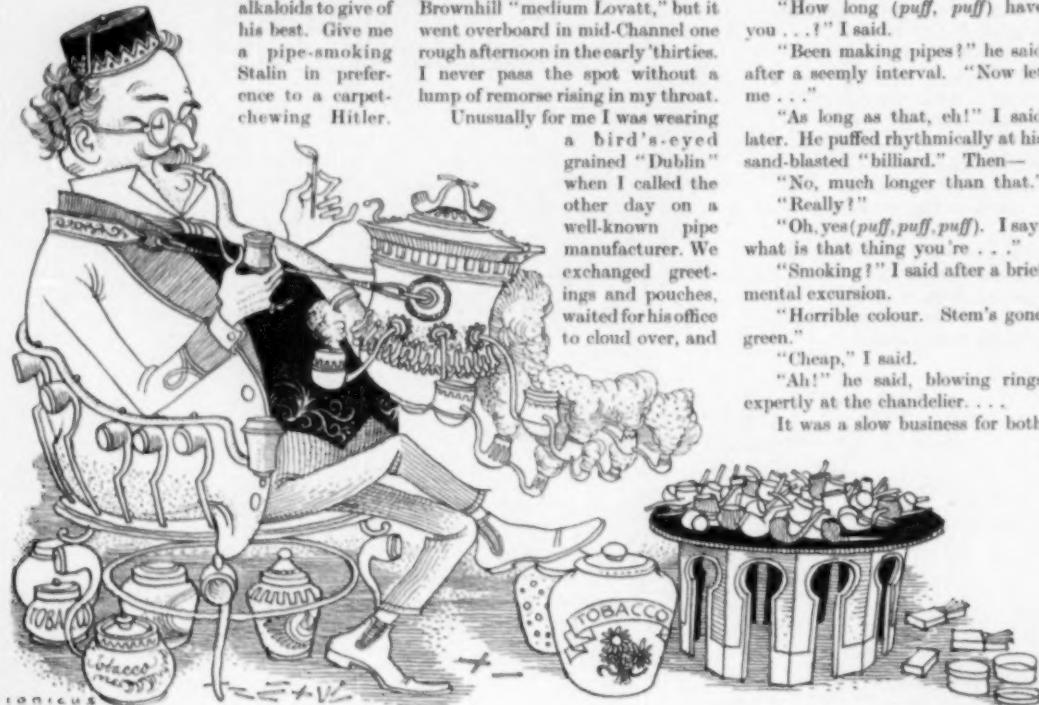
LUN LLEWELLYN



AN INDUSTRIAL JOURNEY

BULLCAPS, SQUAT CAD TOPERS, ETC.

CALL me a simple soul if you like, but I shall still maintain that Stanley Baldwin was an excellent prime minister, that J. B. Priestley and Georges Simenon are two of the greatest living writers, that Sherlock Holmes is the most arresting character in fiction, and that Stalin is essentially a charming and reasonable dictator. There is a lot to be said, I think, for all pipe-smokers: they are level-headed, contemplative, reliable, and when they speak they do so discreetly out of a minute puncture in their sealed lips. Balzac I have never cared for since I read somewhere that he could write effectively only when his desk-drawers were full of rotting apples: Dostoevsky I despise because his literary virility depended upon the frequency with which he changed his shirt. Give me the man who needs only the narcotic stimulus of nicotine and associated alkaloids to give of his best. Give me a pipe-smoking Stalin in preference to a carpet-chewing Hitler.

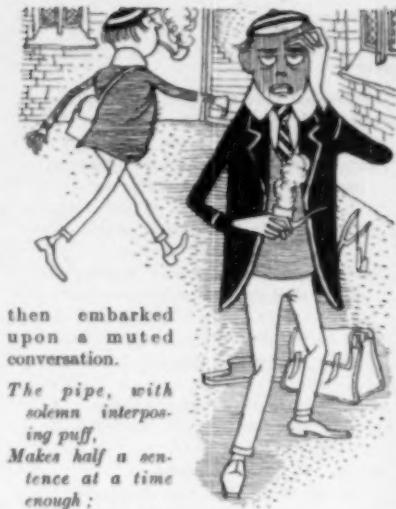


And, while you are in the mood, give me Attlee.

Oddly enough, I am something of a pipe-smoker myself, though I should hesitate to describe myself as inveterate. Georges Simenon, I am told, greets each day by filling two dozen pipes and arranging them neatly on his desk. J. B. Priestley's idea of a perfect holiday is to tramp with a good companion from tobacconist to tobacconist, sampling mixtures and cuts. Holmes was never happier than when he encountered "a three-pipe problem." Such smokers make my efforts seem puny by comparison.

I have only six decent pipes to my name—a "bullock" and a "squat cad toper" which I smoke in the morning, a "medium billiard" and two "saddle apples" which see me through the afternoon, and a "quarter bent prince" for use after dinner. I once owned a handsome Brownhill "medium Lovatt," but it went overboard in mid-Channel one rough afternoon in the early 'thirties. I never pass the spot without a lump of remorse rising in my throat.

Unusually for me I was wearing a bird's-eyed grained "Dublin" when I called the other day on a well-known pipe manufacturer. We exchanged greetings and pouches, waited for his office to cloud over, and



then embarked upon a muted conversation.

The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,

Makes half a sentence at a time enough;

The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
Then pause, and puff—and speak,
and pause again.

"How long (*puff, puff*) have you . . .?" I said.

"Been making pipes?" he said after a seemly interval. "Now let me . . ."

"As long as that, eh!" I said later. He puffed rhythmically at his sand-blasted "billiard." Then—

"No, much longer than that."

"Really?"

"Oh, yes (*puff, puff, puff*). I say, what is that thing you're . . ."

"Smoking?" I said after a brief mental excursion.

"Horrible colour. Stem's gone green."

"Cheap," I said.

"Ah!" he said, blowing rings expertly at the chandelier. . . .

It was a slow business for both

of us, but half an ounce of curly cut later I was a shallow mine of information.

The pipe-makers of London, I learned, were incorporated in 1619, some thirty years after the apocryphal incident involving Sir Walter Raleigh, an Indian pipe, a bewildered man-servant and a bucket of water; and the first London manufactory of briar pipes was established by French immigrants in 1821. Throughout the two hundred and two intervening years men searched indefatigably for the perfect pipe: they tried every raw material—animal, vegetable and mineral—and every conceivable shape and size. And they failed—failed, that is, to achieve an instrument combining the cheapness of the cherry-wood, the refined beauty of the moerschaum and the cool sweetness of the "churchwarden." For two hundred years our forefathers toiled that we might puff in peace; they smoked themselves sick and silly and repeatedly set themselves on fire, but it was the Frenchmen of St. Claude, in the Jura, who discovered the virtues of bruyère.



A "London Made" briar has its roots in the thin, rocky soils of the Mediterranean shorelands, in the hills of Algeria, Corsica and Greece. When the bush heather is old and mature it is felled; its roots are unearthed, stored in clamps, seasoned, sawn into blocks or ébauchons (roughly the size of a box camera), seasoned again and sent to England. Nearly all briar pipes are made from wood that is at least a hundred years old.

I caught up with a load of ébauchons just as they were being trimmed at a circular saw, and I discovered that something like three hundred of them would yield only a dozen first-class pipes. The rest, according to the number and magnitude of their flaws become "seconds," "thirds," "makers' rejects" and firewood. The odd ébauchon in a load of many thousands may produce that connoisseur's delight, a "straight grain," which sells at £60 or £70 if it is a really good specimen.

The turning of the fire-box (that's where you put the tobacco), the shaping of the stem, the drilling of the air-hole and the push-hole, and the patient polishing with sand-paper, pumice and swan's-down—all these are operations much easier to imagine than to describe accurately. They are performed by rows of nimble-fingered workers, seated at their lathes and armed with an assortment of precision instruments.

So much for the bowl. The other two components of the briar pipe are the mouthpiece and the gadget, filter or inner-tube ("No hot, wet dottle; no clogging; no disgusting mouthfuls of nicotine"). Grade A mouthpieces are carved from solid vulcanite and wear better and retain their colour and polish longer than those moulded from plastic material. The filters, or silencers, are all Grade A; that is, they are all supposed to eliminate those distressing complaints—bowl-warble, back-fume, and glottal stoppage. They don't.

Pipe-smoking, with or without gadgets, is now a much simpler business than in the days of the pioneers. According to the Mexican historian Francisco Clavijero, the first addicts smoked reeds or pipes filled with powdered tobacco and had to lie on their backs to prevent the powder spilling—"They (the Indians) received the smoke by sucking the pipe and shutting the nostrils with the fingers, so that it might pass by the breath more easily toward the lungs." The young pipe-smoker is of course



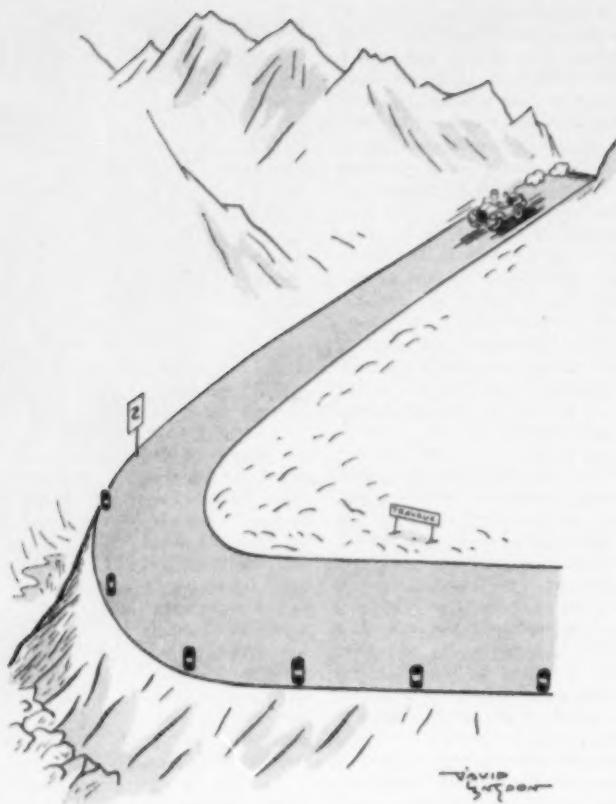
no longer compelled to adopt this horizontal position, though for his first few fills it is an advisable precaution. No, to-day's deterrents are chiefly economic—the prohibitive price of tobacco and the purchase tax on what the Board of Trade calls "smokers' requisites."

I have no wish to create bad blood between pipe and cigarette factions, but I must warn the nation and the Chancellor of the Exchequer that we are growing desperately short of pipe-smoking talent.

Since this newsy article began I am poorer by almost an ounce of tobacco and the Exchequer is richer by roughly three shillings. But how long will this kind of thing continue if our young men eschew the pipes of their ancestors? How long, Sir Stafford?

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD





"Now we'll just see what the Premier Garage,
High Street, Little Primley, means by 'check and
adjust brakes, one pound five shillings and sixpence.'"

SIXTH SENSE

"WHAT's a sixth sense?" asked Michael.

"A sixth sense," I said, "is one over and above the other five. You know what they are, I suppose?"

"Yes," he said. "But . . . what does it do? How does it work?"

"People have them in books," I told him.

"Yes," he said. "But——"

"Question-time," I said, "is over. Bedtime."

I don't like fobbing him off like that, and later, in a fit of parental zeal, I took a good deal of trouble to find out exactly what a sixth

sense is. In fact I went so far as to jot down a few notes for a report on the matter. I wish I hadn't now, because subsequent events have made rubbish of them.

In the first place, I declared, the only people who really have sixth senses, apart from headaches before thunderstorms, are the heroes of thrillers. Also, I said, their sixth senses are often not sixth senses at all but seventh or eighth senses. The hero of the book I was reading last week couldn't manage without nine.

Authors rightly feel, I continued, that it would be straining

the reader's credulity too far to introduce the principal character straight away as a handsome, golden-haired man of six feet two with nine senses, and the first intimation that he is a man of unusual powers customarily appears on page thirty-four, when someone creeps up on him with a knife. "Some sixth sense," we read, "made Cedric turn round." Later, however, in another chapter, some sixth sense makes Cedric refuse the whisky. A little thought will show that this, if it can be called sense at all, is certainly not the same sense as before. It is in fact a seventh sense, and if authors would number each additional sense as it is brought into play it would help the reader to keep a sense of proportion in relation to real life.

In order to bring a little system into the chaos I classified sixth senses roughly under three main heads, viz.: (a) senses that warn the hero that he had better turn round, duck, climb a tree, hide under the mat when he answers the door, etc.; (b) senses that warn him against accepting friendly offers such as a drink, a lift, or bed and breakfast; and (c) senses that warn him when the heroine gets into difficulties in another chapter.

None of these senses, I said, would be of any great benefit in real life. Sense 6(a) I found to be quite common among heroes, and I recognized that it gives them a great advantage in the peculiar conditions under which they work, but I doubted if the average man could get much use out of it. It always works only just in time, which would be too late for the average man, and in any case people do not creep silently up behind the average man with knives. If they do it is unnecessary for him to know anything about it, because they will creep silently away again as soon as they get near enough to see who he is.

In sense 6(b) again, the one that made Cedric refuse the whisky, I found a faculty that, however un-serviceable it might appear at first sight, seemed even more useless if

I looked at it for any length of time. It is true that after Cedric has refused the whisky the author sometimes makes somebody else come in and drink it and crash to the floor never to rise again, but the only reason I can put forward for such gross exaggeration is that no one has crashed to the floor so far in that chapter, or if they have they have risen again and things are getting slow. Anyway I have never seen it happen, although I have knocked about the world a bit and seen whisky refused.

The same thing applied, I said, to sense 6(c): frankly, the average man would not care to be bothered with it. Sense 6(c), in case you have forgotten, is the one that enables the hero to know when the heroine is in difficulties; how many men, I asked, find normal channels inadequate for this task?

All in all, I said, sixth senses seem to be more of a curse than a blessing, and even heroes might be excused for protesting that five are sometimes more than enough.

Well, that's the report. You see the mistake I made? I sneered; I treated the whole thing contemptuously, assuming that the sixth sense was purely fictional and not much use at that. Since then, however, I have been trying to put the report over to Michael. In other words I have been trying to corner for purposes of parental enlightenment a small boy who would rather be somewhere else playing cricket, and if ever anyone showed unmistakably that he has a premonition of impending disaster and an instinct for evasive action amounting to genius . . . well, it's Michael.

2 2

"Walking along the foreshore at Instow, 10-year-old William Ashley, of 2, The Balconies, Instow, saw something glistening in the wet sand. He picked it up and took it home. It was found to be a well-preserved English coin bearing the date 1671.

A notice prohibiting the deposit of litter has now been placed on the sand-hills."—*West Country paper*

Too late again.

BACK ROOM JOYS

PEOPLE DOING THEIR STUFF

WE feel possessively warm

To people running true to form,
Doing their stuff as expected,
As if they were treasures we had personally
collected.

We rather own Winston's cigar,
We display it—"Now look . . . there you are!"
And don't we all acquisitively seize
Mr. Bevin's dropped h's and g's!
They are bets we consistently win,
"Certs" that do really come in—

Like Aunt Cora who phones "for a chat"
And for forty-five minutes that's that—
As we knew it would be from the start,
Bless her heart!

In a world where there's really no knowing
It's a comfort we-told-you-so-ing,
A joy (within reason) for ever—
"Now it's coming" . . . "You see" . . . "Werent
we clever!"

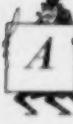
JUSTIN RICHARDSON



"Milk's boiling over!"

AT THE PLAY

Accolade (ALDWYCH)—*The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* (HAYMARKET)
Will Any Gentleman?
(STRAND)

 **ACCOLADE** is a distinguished play on an unpleasant subject which Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS treats with discretion.

His hero is a popular novelist of low life who, frank with his wife, combines married happiness with an ungovernable bent for squalid orgies in the East End. Due at the Palace to be knighted, he is visited by the father of a girl of fourteen he had seduced in the belief that she was much older. Blackmail; but complicated by the father's insane jealousy as a writer who has failed. The interest of *Trenting's* Jekyll-and-Hyde character lies mainly in the survival of his marriage and of his deep friendship with his young son. On the one side he is estimable, kind, honest; on the other are the recurrent episodes at Rotherhithe, as pathological as the dipsomaniac's bottle. This is an extremely effective play, though not particularly moving; it is very well constructed, so that not until afterwards does one seriously question the chances of happy rustication in Guernsey or,



Auto-suggestion

Charley Stirling—Mr. ARTHUR RISCOE; Henry Stirling—Mr. ROBERTSON HARE

still more seriously, ask whether any woman of *Rona's* straightforward character would have stood indefinitely for so extraordinary an arrangement. It seemed to me that both separately and together the *Trentings* took such an appalling blow a little calmly.

The acting is probably the best to be seen in London. Mr. WILLIAMS plays *Trenting* with disarming subtlety. Miss DIANA CHURCHILL's *Rona* is immensely sympathetic. Mr. NOEL WILLMAN's broken black-mailer strikingly original, and Mr. ANTHONY NICHOLLS' loyal publisher, Miss DORA BRYAN's wide-eyed barmaid, and Mr. ANTHONY OLIVER's barrow-boy secretary are all excellent. *Trenting's* son is faithfully taken by Master JOHN CAVANAH, and Mr. GLEN BYAM SHAW has staged admirably a play which should certainly be seen.

It is fashionable to sneer at Pinero, but critics who have condemned as unjustified the revival of *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* must have short memories for the indigestible ineptitudes too often served up hopefully in the West End. This was never a great play, but it continues to be very neat even now that time has removed its social sting.

The revival, smoothly put on by

Mr. MURRAY MACDONALD add richly padded out by Mr. CECIL BEATON, is a good one. Mr. LESLIE BANKS drops into the 'nineties with pleasing assurance. Miss EILEEN HERLIE to my mind lacks the emotional warmth one associates with *Paula*, but otherwise plays her skilfully. And Miss MARIE NEY's *Mrs. Cortelyou* and Mr. RONALD WARD's *Drummie* could not be bettered.

To complete this unusual round of praise Mr. VERNON SYLVAINES's *Will Any Gentleman?* is the best new farce I have seen for years. Not only is there a main-spring that steadily exerts pressure but even the craziest incidents have a logic of their own. It is time somebody ragged music-hall hypnosis, and when the victim is Mr. ROBERTSON HARE, persuaded to be a dog instead of an inhibited cashier, who could ask more? He is nobly abetted in an uncommonly funny evening by Mr. ARTHUR RISCOE and other conspirators.

Recommended

Ring Round the Moon (Globe) for satire and a most delicate production. *Seagulls over Sorrento* (Apollo) for naval comedy with an under-tow of pathos. And for lively American revue, *Touch and Go* (Prince of Wales). ERIC KEOWN



Spontaneous Combustion
Will Trenting—Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS

A CURIOSITY OF COLOUR

"WHERE is your brown tree?" Sir George Beaumont, patron of the arts and amateur painter, ventured to ask John Constable, and this question has raised many a laugh in artistic circles and is still regarded as a classic ineptitude—which is not altogether fair. We may agree with Constable that it was about time the brown tree as a formula of landscape painting was scrapped: and much prefer his own delicious greys, touches of red and that pigment, near enough to white to be called "Constable's snow," by which he represented the sparkle of leaves against the sun. At the same time it can be argued that in art even a brown tree is better than a green one.

A monstrous statement? By no means. Green certainly in nature is infinitely pleasant to see, but it is a curious thing that on paper or canvas it easily becomes dull and negative, and here is one of the many differences between nature and art. By instinct we turn to its opposite when we wish to make the distinction. Though Celts, in song, may still deplore "England's cruel red," the English partiality for it, so noticeable in the dresses of village children, in the vermilion bus,



pillar box and telephone kiosk, is really a healthy aesthetic sign. It shows a sense of the complementaries, of the contrast needed in a land of much greenery. It is true that the Southern Electric coaches rattle through Surrey and Sussex in an emerald camouflage, yet with what enthusiasm have not many people greeted Mr. John Betjeman's plea for a new heraldry of railway trains, for chocolate, crimson and maroon? It is no doubt the same feeling with which Arabs, used to the orange monotony of the desert, think of the contrasting blue of Damascus tiles.

Thus, faced with an expanse of green, European painters have generally sought for some way of translating it into colours more positive and lively. The Beaumont tree, an inheritance from old masters, opposed its comfortable warmth. The Impressionists shadowed their foliage with blue and painstakingly split up the surface of fields into patches of primary hues. A Turner water-colour is as brilliant as a butterfly's wing. There were several such landscapes in the large exhibition, organized by the Empire Art Loan Society and recently showing at the Guildhall, of "Early British Water Colours": and if this

unusual title might almost suggest they were painted with woad, it is a fact that Turner eschews green. In the magnificent "Dudley Castle" from the Lever Art Gallery the scene is resolved into a bold and unnatural contrast of sullen blue and Indian red in which the trees are indigo.

For those who may wish to pursue this aspect of colour farther there is the admirable exhibition of landscape and other drawings in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. The old masters were not averse to putting a hint of colour into their drawings—here in the "bistre," the warm earth-tint in which Claude made his matchless studies of the Roman Campagna, the rusty sanguine of an Italian master, the ultramarine of some daring Frenchman. The only verdant note comes piercingly from a water-colour by Wilson Steer among the "recent acquisitions." Is it perhaps for that reason somewhat fragile and formless among neighbours firm and austere in their sepia?

There is no colour bar in art, but a little green goes a very long way, and it is not merely a Chestertonian paradox to say that grass may occasionally be red.

WILLIAM GAUNT

2 2

OUTDOOR DRESS REHEARSAL

SCENE Two; we'll start from there.
(This is Illyria, lady.)

Remember, Viola, project your voice—
It doesn't carry in the open air.

(Art thou good at these kickshaws, knight?)

Those cedar trees are perfect; dark and shady.
An ideal setting—yes, the Vicar's choice . . .

The colonnade? Just plywood, painted white . . .
Bring up your limes!—Lend me a Number Eight—
(Make me a willow cabin at your gate.)

Floodlight on leaves and grass . . .

(The spinsters and the knitters in the sun.)
Enter the courtiers! . . . Against black trees
Bright silhouettes and dancing shadows pass.
(Daylight and champaign discovers not more.)

Into the spotlight—run, Maria, run!
Behind the bushes, murmurous as bees,

They wait their cues in darkness. Now, Scene Four—
Ambers and cypress; foolery and sadness . . .
(Why, this is very midsummer madness.)

Oh, dear, Sir Toby's beard has come unstuck.
(More matter for a May morning.)
No earthly use in looking at the script—

It's too late now for words; rely on luck!
(Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter.)
Electrics, kill that spot!—you've had the warning!
Remind me I must get that box-hedge clipped . . .
Let's hope to-morrow night it will go better . . .
I wonder what the weather forecasts say . . .
(The rain, sings Feste, raineth every day.)



IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Tuesday, September 12th

As though to stress the eternal truth of Milton's observation that peace hath her victories no less renowned than war, to-day's special vacation-interrupting sitting of Parliament, on defence preparations, was preceded by a recital of heroism in a coal mine. And there was a huskiness and heartiness in the cheer that greeted the story that made the partisan cheers that were to come later seem harsh and tarnished.

It was Mr. NOEL-BAKER, the Minister of Fuel and Power (fresh from the scene), who told the brave story of the rescue of one hundred and sixteen miners who had spent more than two days trapped in a Scottish mine by the subsidence of a field—as remarkable a story of bravery and resource and endurance, said the Minister, as any in our long history.

Deeply moved by the story, with its parable-like quality, the House turned to the next business, and listened to a long and lucid explanation by the Prime Minister of the world's present plight. It was a sad thing, he said, to a long rumble of agreement, that so soon after the World War we should be forced again to spend so much on armaments. But the fact was that the world was so upset by a deliberate Communist drive that all who valued their liberty, national and individual, were forced to take up the challenge and, by opposing, seek to end it. And so he had to ask for approval for the Government's plans to increase the period of compulsory National Service from eighteen months to two years and to raise the pay of the Regular Services by some £68,500,000 a year. And, of course, in the background there was the matter of the three-year rearmament programme, to cost some £3,600,000,000, with the aid of whatever the United States Government was able to contribute.

All, said Mr. ATTLEE, because

the obstruction of the United Nations by the Soviet Government had made it impossible for the peace-loving nations to re-settle the world as they had hoped to do. What had happened in Korea—"naked aggression" as it was—was a warning that the time had come to show all aggressors that crime did not pay and that it would be opposed and dealt with, firmly, by the democracies.

Mr. Churchill rumbled occasional applause as Mr. ATTLEE went on to



Impressions of Parliamentarians

Mr. Shinwell
Minister of Defence (Easington)

outline the rearmament plans, stressing that they could not be carried out without sacrifices on the part of all in the land and the return of a good deal of the austerity to which all had hoped to say farewell. But the Leader of the Opposition showed noticeably less enthusiasm when the Prime Minister failed to give a clear assurance that exports from Britain to Russia of machine tools and other "war goods" would be stopped. Some of them were not going to Russia. . .

"Where to, then?" rapped Mr. C.

"To Poland!" replied Mr. A. with triumph—and seemed surprised when the House rocked with incredulous laughter. However, he promised to see what could be done to stop exports that might harm our national safety.

Mr. CHURCHILL was severe with this part of the Premier's speech, saying it was indefensible that we should be sending to Russia things

which might, in effect, be turned against our own men, and those of our allies, in Korea.

As for the world situation, he found it full of "vast and glowering facts"—but facts that had been there for some time, making the indecision shown by the Government almost incredible.

He added a little wistfully that the present Government could rely on the support of the Opposition for all measures of national defence, whereas pre-war Conservative Governments had not had that advantage. When this drew a derisive hoot from the Government benches he cried that Mr. ATTLEE had led his Party into the voting lobby in opposition to conscription only a few months before the war began in 1939.

If only we were given the time, we had to do our part in forming a European army that would "close the hideous gap" in Europe's defences and stem the Russian rush to the sea. Whether we *should* be given time depended mainly on two incalculable factors—the whim or plan of the Kremlin and the anger of the people of the United States of America.

"We cannot," said Mr. CHURCHILL, dramatically, "control the march of destiny. We can only do our duty!"

Both he and Mr. CLEMENT DAVIES, leading the Liberals, announced their intention to support the Government's motion as a gesture of solidarity in face of the world, encouraging to friend, discouraging to foe.

Wednesday, September 13th

Moving tributes were paid in the Commons (as in the Lords) to-day

House of Commons: to the memory of Economics of General Smuts. Rerarmament The House then proceeded to debate the economic aspects of rearmament, and Mr. GATSKELL, Minister for Economic Affairs, made one of the best speeches of his career.

THE DUST-BIN

THERE are some things that it is more annoying spending money on than others. I do not mind lashing out a bit, for instance, on flannel trousers or crazy paving, but I grudge increasing my overdraft to buy undervests and dust-bins. There is so little to show for the money.

That I did eventually buy a new dust-bin was due entirely to the hints of the dust-men, who for several weeks left the old dust-bin upside down in a derisive sort of way, and in the end gave it a great kick, so that the little crack in the side became a huge gaping hole.

The new dust-bin arrived, and on the following Monday (our dust-men always come on Mondays) I put the old dust-bin on top of the new dust-bin, like a sort of leaning tower of Pisa, so that the dust-men would know that I had no further use for same and take it away.

They did not take it away. When I returned from my mid-morning stroll round the town to buy cigarettes and get inspiration I found the two dust-bins standing side-by-side, the old one looking indescribably raffish against its smart, soldier-like successor.

The following week I again put the old dust-bin on top of the new dust-bin, and to make assurance doubly sure I wrote a few words on a large piece of cardboard and tied it to the lid of the old dust-bin. The note said plainly "Please take away." When I came back from my walk I found that the fools had taken the lid away, but again left the old dust-bin to disgrace the yard.

"Next week," I said to Edith, "one of us must remain at home on Monday morning and tackle the dust-men personally. It is pretty hard that they should force us by their derisive hints to expend the price of seventeen pints of beer on a new dust-bin and then refuse to remove the old one."

Edith said that she had a better idea. She had been reading an article in one of the Sunday papers, she told me, about the proposed Home Garden section of the 1951 Festival of Britain.



"How's the symphony coming along?"

"They are going to show us," she said, "how to make even the dust-bin section of back gardens beautiful. At present almost every back garden has a bit trellised off from the rest, a soul-destroying area with an untidy washing-line, a stark receptacle for coal, an unimaginative dust-bin and a general air of hopeless ugliness. I think it is a good idea to brighten up the yard. And since the dust-men will not remove the old dust-bin I suggest that you take leaf out of the Festival book, and use the old dust-bin for decorative purposes. Painted green, with a couple of neat brown bands to make it look like a barrel, it would

make an admirable tub for a flowering shrub."

It took me most of the following Sunday afternoon to do the job, and on Monday morning I went round to our local nurseryman and asked his advice about the best sort of shrub for brightening a back-yard.

He sold me a great big thing like a sort of stream-lined aspidistra, and when I got home I went straight round to the back to plant it in the old dust-bin as a surprise for Edith when she came in.

Unfortunately the dust-men had been, and my ornamental tub had gone. D. H. BARBER



"Of course we are prepared to make one or two small alterations for suitable tenants."

THE SIN OF PRIDE

SIMPLE were the daisies dotting
Those eternal tracts of grass,
Was there any place for potting,
Adam, was there any glass?
In the wild and tangled copses,
Adam, where of old you lay,
Were there any Coreopsis,
Clarkia or Funkia?

When obedient, when in order
Beast by beast for titles came,
Where was the herbaceous
border?
Had Argemone a name?

Helichrysum, Anagallis,
Did you find them in those
valleys?
Escallonia and Begonia,
Cimicifuga, Pentstemon,
Salpiglossis," said the Demon,
Still attempting to deceive,
"Ceanothus, Potentilla,
You can grow them round the
villa
You intend to share with Eve:
O the rare Odontoglossums!
You can soon have buds and
blossoms,

Favourites and hardy annuals
All unlisted in the manuals
Of the wilderness you leave."

Adam, thinking of the Dahlias—
Never likely to be failures—
The Godetias, the Monbretias,
The Gloxinias and the Zinnias
And Rudbeckia aglow,
Listened to the Tempter Florist
As he roamed outside the forest
And with pride that has no pardon
Went and made a bigger garden
Than the one he used to know.

EVOE

BOOKING OFFICE

England Observed

FOR over twenty years Mr. Hugh McGraw has been writing novels which have gained the approval of the public and been neglected by critics; yet Mr. McGraw is a very good writer indeed, who uses the "light novel" much as Mr. Auden uses the popular ballad. I suppose it is just possible that he does not realize how good he is; but that is unlikely in one of the most observant of living novelists. To adopt Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's classification Mr. McGraw belongs to the purveyors, not the prophets. He ranges himself with Defoe and Fielding and Mr. Maugham, not with George Eliot and Flaubert and Mr. Forster.

Like a legend or a fairy story, a McGraw novel can be read at a number of levels. In a way it carries on from the popular novel of Ian Hay. The difference is, perhaps, that where Ian Hay contrives Mr. McGraw explores. The recipe of a bit of a laugh and a bit of sentiment has always been commercially successful; but it can also be artistically successful. The bit of a laugh can develop through farce into comedy, the bit of sentiment through pathos into tragedy.

For some of his admirers Mr. McGraw's backgrounds are the best part of his work. While English fiction has been spread out thin round the fringes of English life—turning its attention on to does houses, the decaying drawing-rooms of the aristocracy, the lawns of North Oxford and the tattered squares near railway stations where criminals seedily soak—Mr. McGraw has realized that the characteristic environment of the second quarter of this century is the new industrial town, and the most obvious social trend the emergence of the technician. His characters, therefore, are engineering apprentices, draughtsmen, poor young men with motor bikes and flashy young men with cars. There are pubs and first jobs and insecure jobs and, everywhere, girls. The engineer is not patronized as the victim of routine nor canonized as the herald of the dawn. He is painted realistically. When still young he is hearty, competent and terribly hurt by calf-love. As he ages he is worried by the fading of dreams, the nagging fear of being thrown on the scrap heap, the waning of wives and the devilish attraction of a new generation of girls. Usually, in the McGraw world, woman is in pursuit and man licking his wounds.

There are freshly eccentric minor characters and a humour which comes not from the inversion of normality but from the heightening of it. Once, in "Fine Romance," the force of feeling behind the ironic comedy produced a minor masterpiece that if written in French would no doubt be part of every serious reader's well-weeded library. Sometimes Mr. McGraw goes outside the engineering works—to the Tote, a scent factory, A.R.P., a youth club or a gymnasium where young boxers train. The descriptions are equally competent, unobtrusive and memorable. He will be a godsend to social historians of the future.

I do not want to do Mr. McGraw the disservice of

over-praising him. He is a good minor novelist, though I have a feeling that he might suddenly flower into a major one; but he already has a solid achievement behind him, and his various publishers ought to get together and give him a collected edition; his present firm might at least have mentioned the titles of his previous books. *The White Cat*, his new novel, is not, I think, a vintage McGraw, though no doubt it will linger in the memory in the curious way that even his lesser works manage to do. It is the story of a love affair between an embittered commercial artist on the skids and a dumb destructive beauty. It is moving and entertaining, if not so surely as some of the earlier novels. The setting has the usual sturdy individuality and life, and the writing is as crisp and economical as ever.

Miss Elizabeth Eliot's *Henry* is so enjoyable that only the desire to pay a debt of gratitude to a senior writer has prevented me from praising it at length. It is a farce with an odd, appealing flavour and a scurrying, unexpected humour which I liked very much, though perhaps to call it a farce is misleading. The undertones are tragic, making bass counterpoint to the amusing surface. Anyway, warmly recommended.

R. G. G. PRICE

Royal Road

Before 1914 recalled them to France there were Trappists near Cranborne Chase, welcoming all comers to the wilderness their hands had transformed, giving them excellent entertainment—the Port-Salut was particularly good—and a share of their own unspeakable (and, save in the case of the guest-master, unspeaking) happiness. These were Cistercians of eleventh-century Citeaux rather than seventeenth-century La Trappe; and Citeaux itself was but a return



to St. Benedict's sixth-century life of prayerful labour, with silence thrown in to offset sociability and aid contemplation. The magnificent feats and failures of the Order are the theme of *The Waters of Silence*, a theme obviously more inspiring to Thomas Merton (Father Louis, O.C.S.O.) than his recent autobiography. American Trappist foundations first begun by émigrés of the Revolution are described in stirring detail; and martyrdom in Germany, Spain and China illuminates the heroic possibilities of a life which obtains, in any case, a measure of heaven on earth.

H. P. E.

Blood and Sand

To support his conventional tale of intrigue, treachery and revolution in a fictitious Central American republic Mr. Gore Vidal has assembled a lively and cosmopolitan bunch of characters. The entourage of General Alvarez, an exiled pocket dictator who loves his Wagner à la Hitler and boasts of his transport improvements à la Mussolini, is as mixed as the Foreign Legion. Its chief spokesmen are a renegade French scholar and writer, one Charles de Cluny, and a fugitive American soldier of fortune, and it is in their long soliloquies, full of half-baked philosophy, slippery political theory and morbid introspection, that the trivial story of *Dark Green, Bright Red* develops flesh and bones. The General, attempting the inevitable come-back, is too synthetic to be entirely convincing: Latin-American despots are too proud and original, surely, to import their wiles, deceits and idiosyncrasies from jumped-up European imitators. Still, he is real enough for the reader to be thankful that the Catholic Socialist Party's total air strength is one helicopter.

A. B. H.



"I'm, no blank pages this week."

In Defence of Japan

In writing *Broken Thread*, though he quite accurately styles it an autobiography, Major-General Piggott had a purpose beyond mere personal record. He is sparing—but not to the point of austerity—alike of the trivialities and the intimacies of private life. The “thread” of his title “represents Anglo-Japanese relations,” and Japan is the beginning and the end of his story. He went there first at the age of four, when his father became legal adviser to the Prime Minister, and he returned there twice as a language officer and twice as military attaché. From knowledge of the country and its leaders grew a respect and an affection that even Pearl Harbour did not destroy. Regarding the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1921 as a disastrous blunder, he interprets all that followed as in part at least the consequence of Western policies. Here, no doubt, is matter for controversy, but General Piggott writes with an authority as unquestionable as is his freedom from prejudice.

F. B.

Clydeside

In his new novel, *The Piper's Tune*, Mr. George Blake has gathered together all the ingredients necessary to a best seller. His hero, Rab Rollo, a hard-drinking, tough-hearted, lusty squanderer of life and money, is heroic in the accepted way. His legitimate daughter is no use except as a man-trap, but Jenny, born out of wedlock, has virtue and spirit. There is another young woman of character, and there are several sound and honest men. It is one thing to muster ingredients and quite another to mix them, but Mr. Blake stirs with a masterly hand. He has written a first-rate story of ship-builders, yachtsmen and the way men and women suffer for each other. There is not a dull line in the book, and the writing is as good as the story.

B. E. B.

Books Reviewed Above

- The White Cat*. Hugh McGraw. (Arthur Barker, 10/6)
- Henry*. Elizabeth Eliot. (Cassell, 9/6)
- The Waters of Silence*. Thomas Merton (Hollis and Carter, 15/-)
- Dark Green, Bright Red*. Gore Vidal. (John Lehmann, 10/6)
- Broken Thread*. Major-General F. S. G. Piggott, C.B., D.S.O. (Gale and Polden, 21/-)
- The Piper's Tune*. George Blake. (Collins, 10/6)

Other Recommended Books

- The End is Known*. Geoffrey Holiday Hall. (Heinemann, 8/6) Crime: but the crime is suicide, the problem not *who?* but *why?* Interesting, admirably constructed and well-written first novel of the American popular-sociological-documentary school.
- The Ordeal of Paul Cézanne*. John Rewald. (Phoenix House, 30/-) A documented life, with emphasis on Cézanne's relations with Zola. Many illustrations, four in colour; some interesting comparisons between photographs and paintings of the same subject.

The Rim of Terror. Darwin and Hildegarde Teillet. (Gollancz, 9/6) Beautiful girl driving powerful car across U.S. picks up fugitive from Communist villains. A typical Teillet thriller: the skill is very great, the speed terrific, and the suspense relentless.

THINGS TO COME

THE woman went across to the window, surprised. "It's suddenly got lighter," she observed.

The man abstracted himself from his reading. "It's one of the ways you can tell there's been an atomic explosion," he informed her. "A sudden increase in the general illumination. It's in the American handbook on civil defence."

The woman seemed puzzled. "Why do they have to suggest ways you can tell? If there'd been an atomic explosion you'd know."

"They're probably trying to distinguish between an atomic explosion and any other kind of explosion."

"The atomic explosion would be louder."

"They don't seem to be much fussed about noise. It's illumination that they seem to make the touchstone. Telling you how to protect yourself, they say 'If in the open when a sudden illumination is apparent the best plan is instantaneously to drop to the ground, and curl up so as to shade bare arms and hands, neck and face with the clothed body.'"

The woman returned to settle herself in her chair. She said "The chances of me shading bare arms and hands, neck and face if I happen to be wearing my sun suit are negligible."

"Well, I'm afraid that's your responsibility. They say, and they're probably right, that immediate action, and I imagine they mean also appropriate action, could mean the difference between life and death."

"Nice, isn't it?"

"It's no good shutting your eyes to facts. There's a lot to be thought about and guarded against. Blast, shock and fire——"

"We know all them," the woman interrupted.

"—thermal radiation and the initial nuclear radiations."

"Heavens!"

"Though proper protection from the first three could also minimize the danger from the last two. At least, they say that in general it appears so."



"Do we know anyone with the initials M.C.C. who could conceivably want me to accompany him to Australia?"

"Well, that's a comfort, anyway."

"But chances of survival within half a mile of an atomic explosion would be very poor."

"Even if you'd availed yourself of this proper protection against blast, shock and fire which you said!"

"I gather so."

"And dropped to the ground and shaded bare arms and hands, neck and face with the clothed body the way they tell you to!"

"Apparently you'd be wasting your time. There is one thing they say you don't have to worry about,

though. Fears that world-wide contamination by radio-activity may follow atomic explosions are groundless."

"Have you got this fantastic book by heart?"

"There are bits of it that stick in the mind. They calculate that to constitute a world-wide hazard something like a million atomic bombs, of normal size, would have to be detonated."

The woman inquired, suspiciously, "All at once?"

"All at once I should think, or coming pretty lively after each other. And this, they say, clearly

represents a highly improbable situation."

"Why?"

"I don't suppose a million bombs is a practical proposition, for one thing."

"Well, what would you say about half a million? I mean, of course, of normal size."

The man considered. "I should think that's quite possible. They say it doesn't cost any more to make one than it does to build a B49—or 29—and fit it out and train its crew."

"And I suppose, if the Americans can do it, one day the Russians will be able to, too?"

"They don't seem to be any shorter of aircraft than the Americans, if that's anything to go by."

"Well, there's only one thing to hope for," the woman reflected. "That they don't take it into their heads one day to spring a surprise on each other at the same time."



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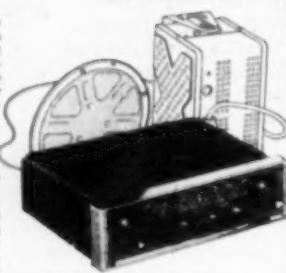
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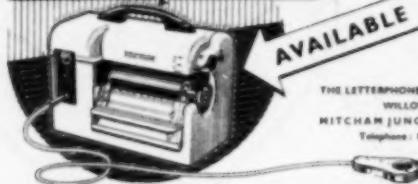
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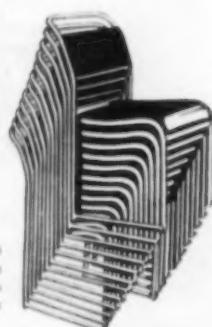


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